About LEVEL news

Contents

Levels on Middle Great Lakes Remain High

Lake Superior Regulation Returning to Standard Operation

Ships Facing Water Level Problems on Lake St. Lawrence

SOLEC Conference

November Precipitation

Water Levels for the Great Lakes and Montreal Harbour
... a monthly bulletin from Canadian Hydrographic Service

About the monthly Water Level bulletin

November Precipitation Over the Great Lakes

As a percentage of the long-term November average:

Great Lakes Basin	94%
Lake Erie (including Lake St. Clair)	97%
Lake Superior	123%
Lakes Michigan-Huron	77%
Lake Ontario	97%

Note: These figures

LEVEL news

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Drier Weather During November

Levels on Middle Great Lakes Remain High

Very little change in the water levels of the middle lakes took place during November. At the beginning of December, Lakes Michigan-Huron, St. Clair and Erie were about 35-45 cm above their seasonal average.

After two months of above average rainfall, the middle and lower portions of the basin experienced drier conditions during November, thereby avoiding an upward blip in levels that occasionally occurs at this time of the year.

Relatively calm conditions along the Great Lakes shoreline during November helped avoid any severe shore damage events during the month.

Lake Superior Regulation Returning to Standard Operation

Flows in the St. Marys Rapids were gradually reduced in late November following discharge of all the water previously stored on Lake Superior during construction this past summer.

All 16 gates at the control structure just above the rapids, also known as the Compensating Works, have been fully opened since September 21 following completion of repairs to the structure. This has enabled very high Lake Superior outflows, thus eliminating the 5 cm of water that was retained on the lake during the summer repairs.

The structure will see an equivalent of one-half gate open for the main rapids for the coming winter months. Also, Gate 1 will have about a one-half open setting to supply water to the fishery remedial dyke.

Because ice can pose difficulties to operating the gates in the winter, gate settings normally remain unchanged throughout the winter, and any Lake Superior outflow changes required by the regulation plan take place by adjusting flows through the three hydropower plants at the rapids.

Although Lake Superior's level declined during November, it remained 17 cm above average in early December. Hence, outflows are expected to remain

are preliminary.

Last Issue

Next Issue

Issue Index

above average for the next few months.

Ships Facing Water Level Problems on Lake St. Lawrence

Summary information for "LEVEL*news*"

Water levels on Lake St. Lawrence above the hydropower dam at Cornwall continued to remain extremely low, a product of very high flows at the dam. It was also reported that ships had difficulties navigating some of the high velocity areas in the St. Lawrence River.

As the Lake Ontario outflows will remain very high, the low water level condition in the river is not expected to improve for the next several weeks. This year, navigation between Lake Ontario and Montreal is expected to end sometime in the last week of December.

While the Lake Ontario outflows during November were high, they barely offset the rain and the high inflows from Lake Erie. The lake remained 17 cm above average in early December.

SOLEC Conference

The state of nearshore areas and related human impacts was the central theme of the second State of the Lakes Ecosystem Conference. Held in Windsor from November 6th to 8th, the conference was sponsored by Environment Canada and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Five background papers on nearshore aquatic, nearshore terrestial, coastal wetlands, changing land use, and information and information management were prepared and presented at the conference. These papers, along with further information on the conference, are available on the Worldwide Web.

Top of Page
Français | Contact Us | Help | Search | Canada Site
What's New | Topics | Publications | Weather | Home | About Us

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